

MANAGEMENT OF IDEAS ACCUMULATED IN A COMPUTER DATABASE

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

5 The present invention pertains to management of ideas accumulated in a computer database. The accumulated ideas may include needs, problems, solutions, requirements, discoveries and/or inventions. A discovery of a problem, need or requirement calling for a solution is commonly an integral idea-component of an invention.

10 The present invention provides a method of managing ideas, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) in exchange for transfers of property rights under patent rights to prospectively patentable inventions derived at least in part from the accumulated ideas, or in exchange for contractual obligations to transfer said property rights, providing contingent contractual rights to a portion of anticipated income derived from said property rights.

In the preferred embodiments, said ideas include needs and/or requirements of said inventions.

20 In some preferred embodiments, the method further comprises the step of:

- (c) facilitating provision of such contingent rights by on-line communications between a computer system maintained by a proprietor of the database and computers used by contributors of ideas to the database.

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Preferably all of the steps are performed systematically. In alternative embodiments some of the foregoing steps are not performed systematically.

The foregoing steps are performed by one party or by different parties in concert with
5 one another.

The present invention also provides computer readable storage media, comprising computer executable instructions for causing a computer to manage ideas in accordance with the method of the present invention.